



Cholera Vaccine

What You Need to Know

Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS) are provided by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Written for soldiers and their families, they provide basic information on deployment medications that are intended as guidance only; consult your health care provider for more information.

What is cholera?

Cholera is a bacterial infection of the intestine that causes diarrhea. The infection is usually mild or has no symptoms. However, severe cases of cholera can cause profuse watery diarrhea, vomiting, and leg cramps. These severe cases cause loss of body fluids that can lead to dehydration, shock, and—with no treatment—death.

How do you get cholera?

- Cholera is not likely to spread directly from one person to another. Casual contact with an infected person will not make you sick.
- Drinking water or eating food that has cholera bacteria.
- In an outbreak, from the feces of an infected person. Cholera can spread quickly in areas with poor sewage and drinking water treatment.
- Eating raw shellfish. Some people in the United States contracted cholera after eating raw or undercooked shellfish from the Gulf of Mexico.

Who should get the vaccine and how is it given?



- The vaccine was given to soldiers if it was required to enter the country they were traveling to or if The Surgeon General required it for deployments.
- Currently no country or territory requires vaccination as a condition for entry.
- It is not recommended for travelers because of the brief and incomplete protection it provides
- Currently the manufacture and sale of the only licensed cholera vaccine in the United States has been discontinued.

What does the military require?

- There is no current military requirement for the cholera vaccine.
- The military does require strict water discipline in areas where there has been a cholera outbreak.
- Local authorities in some countries may require documentation of vaccination cholera.

Are there any side effects?

- You may have redness, tenderness, or pain at the site of the injection for a few days.
- You may also feel tired, have a headache, or have a mild to moderate temperature for 1 to 2 days.

Is there any reason I shouldn't get the vaccine?

Discuss the risks and benefits of getting the vaccine with your health care provider if you have:

- Had a severe reaction to a cholera vaccine in the past.
- Any medical conditions.
- Had a recent illness.
- Received any other vaccines within the last month.
- Been taking any over-the-counter, herbal, or prescription medicine.

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?

- The vaccine should be given during pregnancy only when clearly needed. Talk to your health care provider about the risks and benefits.
- It is not known if the vaccine appears in breast milk. Consult your health care provider before breast-feeding.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose for any reason, get the missed dose as soon as possible and then continue the injection schedule. Do NOT re-start the vaccination series.

You *can* avoid getting cholera!

- Get each vaccination as scheduled.
- Practice good hand washing and proper personal hygiene.
- Properly prepare and store foods.
- Use only Veterinary or Preventive Medicine-approved foods, beverages, or water.

Be sure the vaccination is recorded in your medical record.

Where can I get more information?

- Health care provider at your military treatment facility.
- Military Immunizations web page: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/immunization/vaccines.html>
- CDC Specific Disease web site: www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm

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